



OFFICE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: CENTRAL DATA EXCHANGE

Central Data Exchange (CDX) is the point of entry on the Environmental Information Exchange Network (Exchange Network) for data submissions to the Environmental Protection Agency. Through CDX and the Exchange Network, EPA is working with reporting entities, including industry, States, local agencies and Tribes to enable user-friendly, streamlined, electronic submission of data via the Internet.

Purpose

Industry and other entities routinely submit environmental information, such as compliance reports, to the EPA and state governments. In the past this information was submitted on paper, but now information technology has made it possible to generate and submit data electronically.

Through joint partnership, EPA and the States are establishing the Exchange Network to facilitate environmental information *sharing* among EPA, States, Tribes, localities, and other entities. CDX, the central communication point or “node” of this network, will enable reduced reporting and compliance burdens, improved data quality, enhanced data integration, and increased data availability to the public.

CDX Reporting Customers Will Benefit by:

- Simplified reporting to a single point instead of many separate programs
- Faster turn-around using electronic reporting and receipt confirmation
- Fewer errors by using smart forms, on-line help, and automated error checking
- Reduced burden by eliminating the costs of preparing and mailing paper forms
- Improved security through registration and authentication

Background

In 1998, the States and EPA—recognizing the need for an information exchange system that could meet the needs of environmental decision-makers at all levels—committed to a partnership to build locally and nationally accessible environmental information systems. These information systems would ensure that both the public and regulators could access the information needed to document environmental performance, understand environmental conditions, and make sound decisions that ensure environmental protection. In 2000, the Information Management Work Group of EPA and state representatives, through the Environmental Council of the States, proposed the Environmental Information Exchange Network (Exchange Network) as a solution. The Exchange Network will connect EPA and State environmental databases over the Web using CDX as EPA’s exchange portal or “node” to the Exchange Network..

Current Activities

The Office of Information Collection’s Central Receiving Branch is currently responsible for:

- Implementing the Central Data Exchange (CDX)
- Developing the technical capabilities to receive and process electronic reports
- Developing a regulatory framework to ensure that electronic submissions are legally acceptable
- Conducting data exchange pilot programs with volunteer reporting entities, States, and Tribes
- Partnering with States, Tribes, programs, regions and other stakeholders to implement successful Network-based data exchanges that will launch the Exchange Network

Progress to Date

CDX currently collects data and distributes it on behalf of 6 Agency data collections:

- Toxics Release Inventory (TRI)
- National Emissions Inventory (NEI)
- Permit Compliance System for certain States using the Interim Data Exchange Format (PCS-IDEF)
- Safe Drinking Water Access and Review System (SDWARS)/ Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation (UCMR)
- Toxic Substances Control Act for Health and Safety Data (TSCA HaSD)
- Air Quality System (AQS)

CDX has over 9,500 unique registered users, representing:

- More than 45 States and Tribes
- More than 4,000 local government and public water supply systems
- More than 10,000 facilities

Other major systems are undergoing testing over the next several months prior to their deployment: Resources Conservation Control Act Information (RCRAInfo), Beaches/STORET, Air Quality System (AQS), and Radionuclide NESHAPS. To support the strategic efforts of the Exchange Network, CDX has defined functional specifications that can be used to support CDX's exchange capabilities with other state governments, and has completed beta tests with seven States. In conjunction with these electronic reporting activities, the Cross-Media Electronic Reporting and Record-Keeping Rule (CROMERRR) has been proposed to establish the legal framework for electronic reporting.

CDX now supports thousands of external customers from its new facilities at EPA's National Computing Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina and from its testing and development center in New Carrollton, Maryland. CDX has merged operations with the EPA's EPCRA and Risk Management Program Reporting Centers.

The Future

As CDX continues to expand the infrastructure to support its role as the EPA's node on the Exchange Network, it will finalize the guidance and regulations need to establish the legal framework for electronic reporting.

- By December 2003, 3 additional systems will go into production using CDX.
- By December 2004, CDX expects to support 13 data flows.
- By 2005, CDX will be fully capable of supporting major EPA Programs and the Exchange Network, with the goal of eventually integrating nearly all of EPA's data collection and information systems.

For More Information, Contact:

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